

Mansfield Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities

Regular Meeting - Tuesday Feb. 28, 2006

2:30 PM - Conference Room C - Audrey P. Beck Building

I. Recording Attendance:

Present: K. Grunwald (staff), W. Gibbs, S. Hasson, J.S. Sidney, C. Vincente (staff), J. O'Keefe (staff).

Regrets: S. Thompson, T. Miller

II. Approval of the Minutes for the Informational Meetings, Nov. 29, 2005 and Jan. 24, 2006: the minutes of both of these meetings were approved as written.

III. New Business

a. Update on usage of Community Center – C. Vincente and J. O'Keefe attended to talk about issues related to the use of the Community Center. They displayed a copy of their Safety Manual, which includes policies for evacuation of all people in the case of an emergency. All staff are trained on these policies. Modifications have been made to the wheelchair-accessible shower in the women's locker room, and J. Sidney reports that these changes allow her to be independent. She asked about the possibility of an emergency pull cord being installed near the shower, and also mentioned that accessible facilities continue to be used by people who appear to be able-bodied. Some suggestion was made about improved signage to address this. She also asked if the door to the pool could have an opener installed. This could be difficult, as the building utilizes negative-pressure, which makes it more difficult to open doors. C. Vincente acknowledged that all doors in the building cannot be customized, but he will explore suggestions. J. O'Keefe gave an overview on the Center's new "family friendly" policies and programs. C. Vincente reported on a grant application being submitted to improve handicapped accessibility to Mansfield's River Park. This advisory committee endorsed the application, and suggested that it be reviewed to insure that "people first" language is used throughout the application. C. Vincente also mentioned that they are in the process of putting a trail map on the Town's website, which includes handicapped-accessible parks. The group commented on the possibility of including a map of the Town identifying all buildings and facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities.

IV. Old Business

a. Continuing discussion on suggestions for disaster preparedness planning for persons with disabilities or similar limitations: no further discussion.

b. Review of committee members' comments made regarding Town's ADA Policy and Grievance Procedure: the committee reviewed the proposed policy and approved it as written.

c. Other: there was some discussion about the status of the proposed Storrs downtown project, and the committee continues to request that issues of accessibility be taken into account in the design of that project.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Grunwald